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ABSTRACT

A majority of the population of Friesland in the Netherlands can speak the Frisian language and over 90 percent can understand it. Frisian is spoken by 55 percent of the population but only 10 percent of the population claim to be fluent in writing Frisian. A brief review of the development of Frisian in education suggests that Frisian has a rather strong position in formal legislation in education. Further, the formulation of objectives hints at the direction of full bilingualism. However, the position of Frisian in daily practice is rather weak and the implementation of Frisian has not resulted in a strong position of Frisian in primary education. Analysis of class hours per week spent on other minority languages in Europe such as Catalan, Basque, and Welsh supports this point. A research project is described that investigated the command of Frisian and Dutch by both Frisian- and Dutch-speaking students. Data are presented concerning students' speaking, reading, comprehension, spelling, and composition abilities. Findings support two conclusions: (1) education in Frisian does not negatively influence the command of the Dutch language of either Frisian- or Dutch-speaking pupils in Friesland, and (2) the command of the Frisian language of both Frisian- and Dutch-speaking pupils is of a very low level at the end of primary school. (Contains 27 references.) (JP)

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ED 365 131

Sikko de Jong & Alex M.J. Riemersma

BILINGUAL EDUCATION IN FRYSLAN: Levels of language proficiency in both Dutch and Frisian at the end of primary school[1]

1. THE CURRENT POSITION OF THE FRISIAN LANGUAGE

Friesland is one of the twelve provinces of the Netherlands. The frontiers of the Frisian language area are more or less congruent with the borders of the province.
The population of the province of Friesland numbers about 600,000. A majority of the population can speak the Frisian language; over 90 percent can understand it. As a daily language and as a mother-tongue, Frisian is spoken by about 55 percent. Frisian literacy is much weaker: 65 percent can read Frisian, only 10 percent claim to be fluent in writing Frisian. For further details see Gorter et al. 1984.

Linguistically Frisian and Dutch are both in between German and English. After the Middle Ages language contacts between Frisian and Dutch became more and more frequent, and the linguistic differences between these two languages narrowed. In general, one could say, that today both languages are syntactically almost identical, that the differences in vocabulary are decreasing more and more, and that even phonology, grammar and pronunciation are in danger of being levelled to those of Dutch.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF FRISISAN IN EDUCATION

Throughout the 20th century, in Friesland the education of the Frisian language has been considered an important instrument of language maintenance. People and authorities, responsible for other domains of life in society, tend to declare the school as the only responsible instrument for language maintenance.
Fortunately, education is not the only topic of language planning in Friesland. In the last decades there is a growing interest for the position of Frisian in public administration, judiciary, cultural life and economic life as well. As far as the minority language has a real function in daily life, for example in health care institutions, church life, economic life, mass media, cultural life etc., there will be a greater chance for reversing language shift.

From 1970 onwards the central government recognises the bilingual status of the province of Friesland. As a consequence of this recognition, in primary education and teacher training, Frisian has been a compulsory subject from 1980 onwards. From 1988 all schools for special education are to pay attention to the Frisian language and culture in the curriculum. Frisian is permitted as a medium of instruction in primary education and special education explicitly.

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In 1974 one out of four primary schools had Frisian as a subject and/or medium on the course list. Nowadays this number is over 95%, the only exceptions being situated on the islands. Objectives are formulated by central administration, and Teacher Training Programmes, teaching materials and school guidance facilities are provided.
In fact, Frisian is taught on average one hour a week in all primary schools in Friesland. At this moment about one out of ten schools is teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and arithmetic through the medium of Frisian. Most of them are situated in the countryside and have a student-body of which over 75% is Frisian-speaking. They can be qualified as early immersion schools, as mentioned in the 1989 inquiry of the inspectorate (Inspectie van het onderwijs 1989: 33).

From August 1993, Frisian is a compulsory subject in the lower classes of secondary education. Along with in-service training programmes, projects are set up for the development of a curriculum, teaching materials and tests. Howéver, the objectives for Frisian in secondary education, although formulated on request of central administration, don't have the same status as the objectives set for the other subjects.
Until now, in secondary education Frisian is taught at one out of four schools, on average in one or two grades and only one hour a week. In the next few years Frisian in secondary education is to have the same position as in primary schools (Riemersma 1993).
Frisian in higher education has a very limited function (Riemersma 1987). At the Teacher Training Colleges for both primary and secondary education Frisian is taught as a subject and very seldom used as a medium (Gildemacher & Riemersma 1993). In 1993, two Colleges for Higher Vocational Training at Ljouwert established the J.H. Halbertsma-Akademy, responsible for Frisian studies at both Colleges and related projects. Departments for Frisian studies exists at the universities of Amsterdam and Groningen (Breuker 1987).

One might conclude that Frisian has a rather strong position in formal legislation on education. The formulation of objectives hints at the direction of full bilingualism. However, the position of Frisian in daily practice of education is rather weak (cf. Sikma & Gorter (1991)).

3. ACTUAL POSITION OF FRISIAN IN PRIMARY EDUCATION

In primary education Frisian has been a compulsory subject for more then 10 years. In 1980 there was a lot of enthusiasm among the advocates of the Frisian language. The obligation to teach Frisian was seen as a crucial step for the maintenance of the Frisian language. To implement this obligation a lot of work has been done: Special projects on curriculum development and the development of teaching materials have been carried out. More than 2,500 teachers have taken a special course of in-service training, set up by the teacher training colleges and school guidance institutes.

In 1985 and 1989 the school inspectorate has gathered quantitative data on the education of Frisian. In two reports this information was made public (De Jong 1986; Inspectie van het onderwijs 1989).
The 1989 inquiry of the schoolinspectorate shows that the choice of objectives for the education of Frisian is limited to understanding and reading of the Frisian language and that there is hardly any differentiation in objectives.
To sum up:

* 80% of the primary schools have embodied reading of the Frisian language, in combination with other skills, in their objectives.
* 22% of the primary schools do not use Frisian as a medium of instruction[1].
* In only 10% of the primary schools in writing Frisian is part of the curriculum. No wonder, Frisian in writing is hardly used in daily life. However, the exclusion of writing is also due to the command of the Frisian language by teachers: 38% of the teachers say that they can hardly write in Frisian or not at all.
* The percentage of the schools who want to educate all the skills of Frisian has decreased from 22% to 16% in a period of 3 years.
* Although there is a strong increase in the mixed-language situation in the primary schools in Friesland, 67% of the schools do not differentiate in objectives.
* One-third of the schools reports that they think the pupils' motivation for Frisian is weak. The pupils' motivation for Frisian is considerably weaker than their motivation for the subjects Dutch and English. One might say that this weak motivation of the pupils is partly caused by the schools themselves by setting inadequate objectives.

These quantitative data on objectives, differentiation and motivation don't give an optimistic view of the education in Frisian in daily practice. We can hardly expect that schoolpractice in this way will be an instrument in maintaining the Frisian language.
From the point of view of innovation theory, one might conclude, that the process of implementation has not resulted in a strong

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[1]. For more details see De Jong (1993).

position of Frisian in primary education. Unfortunately, the process of implementation has just reached the first stage, that of initiation (Janssens 1987). The enthusiasm of the advocates of the Frisian language in 1980 has proved to be too optimistic.
To illustrate this weak position we will have a look at the time-expenditure of Frisian in primary schools. The time-tables of most of the schools in Friesland show, that the Frisian language is taught for a maximum of 0.45 hours a week. When we compare this figure with the expenditure of time on education in some other minority languages in Europe, like Welsh, Basque and Catalan, the conclusion must be that Frisian has a weak position in primary education (see: Table 1).

Table 1
Class hours per week spent on the ML as a subject (in minutes or school hours)

language	hours/minutes	remarks
Catalan (F)	15-60-120	great diversity, in most cases between 15 and 60 min., in a few cases 2 hours/week
Catalan (S)	3-4	hours do not apply to the region of Aragon
Basque (S)	150-225	
Basque (F)	3	
Welsh	100-150	English medium schools with Welsh as L2
Frisian	45-60	in 75% of the schools

(F) = France
(S) = Spain
(Selection out of Table 4.5 in Sikma & Gorter 1991: 31.)

Along with this international comparison on the position of other autochthonous minority languages, on national scale the position of Frisian in education can be compared with the legal and practical position of the allochthonous languages in education.
In the Netherlands a maximum of 100 hours per school year is to be spent to Ethnic Minority Language Instruction, that is on average 2,5 hours/week. The pupils are only obliged to receive this instruction at the request of their parents. The participation of two of the main groups of ethnic minorities in the Netherlands in Ethnic Minority Language Instruction is rather high: 80% of the Turkish children and 69% of the Moroccan children in primary education (Extra & Verhoeven 1993: 22). Compared with these figures the time-expenditure on Frisian is very limited as well: most of the primary schools in Friesland spend less than 1 hour a week to Frisian lessons; only primary schools with a special bilingual programme spend more than 2 hours a week to Frisian lessons and Frisian medium lessons (Inspectie 1989). These schools mostly have a school population of over 75% Frisian speaking pupils. This means, that most of the Frisian speaking pupils have less education in Frisian than pupils from allochtho-

nous backgrounds in their mother-tongue, and that there does not exist a Frisian-immersion education-model for pupils from non-Frisian backgrounds.
One might conclude, that the education system in the Netherlands should be qualified in terms of submersion, as defined by Skutnabb-Kangas (1984: 191). This holds both for Frisian speaking pupils and those from allochthonous backgrounds.

4. RESEARCH PROJECTS ON FRISIAN IN EDUCATION

After the Second World War, the existence of Frisian in education has been the reason for several research projects in Friesland. Three of them were concentrated on (Dutch) language proficiency of the pupils. These three research projects have in common that they focus mainly on the command of Dutch, the dominant language, by Frisian speaking pupils. However, as stated by Extra & Verhoeven (1985), a valid investigation of the results of bilingual education should take into account both the command of the dominant and the minority language.

From an educational point of view it is hard to understand that there has been no evaluation of the results of the bilingual schooling in Friesland after the introduction of the obligation to teach Frisian in primary education. Neither the command of the Dutch language nor the command of Frisian by pupils at the end of primary school has been investigated. For the development of a good strategy for bilingual schooling it is necessary to know the strong and weak points of the proficiency of both languages of the pupils.

In 1988, the Dutch National Institute for Educational Measurement (CITO) tested the pupils' command of Dutch. This was done in the framework of a national periodical testing-programme, which was to give information on the results of the pupils of all the compulsory subjects at the end of the primary school. The national government considers evaluation of the results of education as an instrument to improve the quality of education.

Although Frisian has been a compulsory subject in primary education since 1980, Frisian is not included in the national periodical testing programme. The exclusion of Frisian from the national testing programme can be considered as an example of the ambivalent attitude of the central administration towards Frisian in education.

For a real discussion about the quality and the level of education in both Frisian and Dutch in primary education in Friesland, it is essential to gather emperical data. So we decided to take the initiative to develop a testing programme ourselves and we started the project "Taalpeiling yn Fryslân" (= Assessment of the language skills in Friesland). In our research project we explicitly investigated the command of both languages by Frisian speaking pupils and Dutch speaking pupils as well.

To fairly compare the results of the command of Dutch by the pupils in Friesland with the results of the national tests, we used some of the tests which were used in the national testing programme. From the CITO-institute we got the national data about the tests we used. This enabled comparison of the results of both groups. For Frisian we developed tests analogous to the design of the Dutch tests from the national testing institute[2].

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[2]. In this project the language proficiency in Frisian and Dutch and the command of some linguistic specialities of Frisian are investigated. Our colleague J. Ytsma of the Fryske Akademy is responsible for the research on the linguistic specialities.

5. EMPERICAL DATA

Now let us look at some empirical data on the command of both the Dutch and the Frisian language among the pupils of primary education. In our project "Taalpeiling yn Fryslân" (= Assessment of the Language skills in Friesland) the command of the Frisian and Dutch language of 825 children of grade 8 of 48 primary schools was tested.
To compare the results of the command of Dutch of the pupils in Friesland with the results of the national tests, we used some of the tests developed by the CITO-institute. For Frisian we developed tests analogous to the design of the Dutch tests from the CITO-institute.

In the following paragraphs we will present some preliminary findings of our project. We will concentrate on the command of both Dutch and Frisian, to wit the results of the tests on the basic skills of understanding, fluency, reading (technical and reading comprehension) and writing (spelling and composition).

5.1 Understanding

5.1.1 Understanding of Dutch

To test the understanding of the Dutch language we used a tape with a news item and two announcements. The maximum score was 9 points. The results are represented in Table 2.

Table 2
Understanding of the Dutch language

	n	average
Frisian speaking pupils	422	7.3
Dutch speaking pupils	355	7.4
national results	761	7.3

The pupils of the three groups answered 80% of the questions correctly. This means that the understanding of the Dutch language is no problem for Frisian and Dutch speaking pupils in Friesland. Table 2 shows that the score of the Dutch-speaking pupils in Friesland is just a little bit higher than the average score of the Frisian-speaking pupils and the national average. However, this difference is not significant.

5.1.2 Understanding of Frisian

To test the understanding of the Frisian language we used a schoolradio programme with 15 multiple-choice questions. It turned out that understanding Frisian is no problem for non-Frisian speaking children. Their average score was 12.5. The results are represented in table 3.

Table 3
Understanding of the Frisian language

	n	average

Frisian speaking pupils	421	13.2
Dutch speaking pupils	356	12.5

5.2 Speaking ability

5.2.1 Speaking ability in Dutch

To test the fluency in Dutch we have made use of a test of the national testing institute.
The pupils were asked to talk spontanuously about boring people they had met in their own life ("vervelende mensen"). The tapes of these talks are * graded / marked (beoardeeld) and scored by four university students who did their work independent of each other. The students are of a Frisian speaking background, but they don't study linguistics and we didn't inform them on beforehand about the details of our research project. The students were to give a score in between 0 and 200 points on communicative effectiveness. The results are represented in Table 4.

Table 4
Speaking ability in Dutch

	n	average
Frisian-speaking pupils	97	84.2
Dutch-speaking pupils	73	86.6
national results	133	83.8

The table shows that there is no relevant or significant difference between the national results and the results of the pupils in Friesland. The ONEWAY test shows that there is a little significant difference between the Dutch speaking pupils and the Frisian speaking pupils, but this difference is not very great ($p = .028$).
Besides this, the students gave a mark to each of the pupils on the question whether he or she speaks "Standard Dutch" (on a scale from 0 - 10 points). The Frisian speaking pupils ($n = 97$) get on average a mark of 6.8, whereas the Dutch speaking pupils ($n = 73$) get on average a mark of 7.2. Although the difference is significant indeed, the difference between the actual marks is only relative.

5.2.2 Speaking ability in Frisian

To test the pupils' fluency in Frisian they were asked to talk spontanuously about smart people they had met in their own life or about a joly happening. The tapes were considered and scored by the same four students who again did their work independent of each other again. The results are represented in Table 5.

Table 5
Speaking ability in Frisian

	n	average
Frisian speaking pupils	104	92
Dutch speaking pupils	76	80

The table shows that the results of the Frisian speaking pupils are higher than the result of the others. The ONEWAY test shows that this difference is significant indeed (p = ...). However, the ANOVA shows, that this difference is not related to the linguistic background of the school.
Besides this, the students gave a mark to each of the pupils on the question whether he or she speaks "Standard Frisian" (on a scale from 0 - 10 points). The results differ widely: the Frisian speaking pupils get on average a mark of 7.1, whereas the Dutch speaking pupils only get a mark of 3.7. This great difference might be caused by the absence of special attention towards oral fluency in Frisian in the curriculum.

5.3 Basic (technical) reading

5.3.1 Basic reading in Dutch

Reading can be devided in basic (technical) reading and reading comprehension. Let us first look at the level of basic reading of the pupils at the end of grade 8. For basic reading the children had to read in one minute as many words as possible from a list with 96 Dutch words. The list consists of words of more than three syllables. Their score is the number of correctly pronounced words. The national results and the results of both the Frisian and Dutch speaking pupils are represented in Table 6.

Table 6
Basic technical reading in Dutch

	n	average
Frisian-speaking pupils	188	52.4
Dutch-speaking pupils	136	53.8
national results	703	53.1

Although the results of the Frisian-speaking children are the lowest, an analysis of the results make clear that the scores of the three groups do not differ significantly. Neither the national results nor the results of the Dutch-speaking children are significantly higher than the results of the Frisian-speaking pupils.

5.3.2 Basic reading in Frisian

For this test the pupils were to read aloud in one minute as much as possible words from a list of Frisian words. The list consists of words of one syllable, two syllables and three or more syllables, to start with the easier ones. Their score is the number of correctly pronounced words. The results of basic reading in Frisian of the pupils at the end of grade 8 are represented in Table 7.

Table 7
Basic (technical) reading in Frisian

	n	average	s.d	T	sig

Frisian speaking pupils	102	59.1	11.3	4.42	.000
Dutch speaking pupils	100	52	12.5		

The general score is 55.5

The table shows that the Frisian speaking pupils score significantly higher than the Dutch speaking pupils.
However, when we compare these results and the average results of the different kinds of schools with the Dutch standards for the end of the primary education, we can see that the results are on a very low level.

Neither the Frisian-speaking pupils nor Dutch speaking pupils manage to reach the fifth decile of the Dutch standard for grade 8 (75-77). They hardly reach the fifth decile of the standard for the end of grade 5 (55-58), as mentioned in Brus and Voeten (1973:61). This means that the average command of the basic reading of Frisian is two years behind the standards they should reach.

5.4 Reading comprehension

5.4.1 Reading comprehension in Dutch

To test reading comprehension we used two texts with 10 questions; a newspaper report and an information leaflet from an institute for youth-assistance. The maximum score was 10 points.
The national results and the results for the Frisian and Dutch-speaking children are represented in Table 8.

Table 8
Reading comprehension in Dutch

	n	average
Frisian-speaking pupils	422	7.7
Dutch-speaking pupils	355	7.9
National results	761	7.2

The analysis of the results shows that the Frisian and the Dutch-speaking pupils in Friesland, with an average of 7.7 and 7.9, score significantly higher than the pupils who were involved in the national test, with a score of 7.2. Perhaps this is due to the higher expenditure of time (0.30 hours a week) of the schools in Friesland on reading.

5.4.2 Reading comprehension in Frisian

To test the reading comprehension in Frisian we used two tests. First a cloze-test with 41 words to be filled in. This test was in a multiple-choice format with 4-answer categories. Second a Frisian text from a Frisian weekly for children, with 10 multiple choice questions with 4-answer categories.
The general scores for the reading comprehension and the cloze-test were 7.2 and 30.2. When we look at the results of the Frisian and Dutch pupils in table 9, we can see that

only in the cloze-test the Frisian children score significantly higher than the Dutch pupils. A possible explanation of this difference in results is that the cloze-test as such is a more diffficult test than the other test on reading comprehension.

Table 9
Reading comprehension in Frisian

	Frisian speaking pupils			Dutch speaking pupils				
	n	average	s.d.	n	average	s.d.	T	s
Frisian reading comprehension test	335	7.3	1.8	251	7.1	2.1	1.60	n.s
cloze test	309	31.1	5.1	223	28.8	6.2	4.68	.000

From this table, we may conclude that the results of the reading comprehension in Frisian are good. Even the Dutch speaking pupils give the correct answer to 70% of the questions.
When we compare the results of the basic-reading and the reading-comprehension, we may conclude that the low level of the basic-reading does not prevent comprehension of a Frisian text. It seems that at the end of the primary school comprehension does not strongly depend on basic-reading. This is in accordance with the results of other surveys (Danhoff, Smelt & Van der Wissel, 1978 & Galema & Hacquebord, 1985 with Turkish children). Segalowitz, Poulsen & Komeda (1991) claim that less skilled readers make greater compensatory use of the context.

5.5 Spelling

5.5.1 Spelling in Dutch

To test the command of Dutch spelling we used a test with 12 sentences. In every sentence one word was underlined. The children had to choose whether the word was correctly spelled or misspelled. The national results and the results of the Frisian and the Dutch-speaking pupils are represented in Table 10.

Table 10
The results of the Dutch spelling tests

	n	average
Frisian speaking children	425	10.0
Dutch speaking children	362	10.1
national results	721	10.1

The average scores of the Frisian and Dutch-speaking children and the results of the pupils in the national test do not differ significantly.

5.5.2 Spelling in Frisian

Frisian orthography differs very much from Dutch orthography. To test the command of the Frisian orthography the children received a text in which 22 words had been underlined. These underlined words could be split up into 11 orthographic cases; one time written correctly and one time mis-spelled. The children had to choose whether the underlined word was spelled right or wrong. The results are represented in Table 11.

Table 11
Command of the Frisian orthography

	n	average	s.d	T	sig.
Frisian-speaking pupils	337	15.3	2.7	5.73	.000
Dutch-speaking pupils 251	14				

The general score was 14.8. The table shows that there is a significant difference between Frisian and Dutch-speaking pupils. One might assume that the results of the spelling test are not too bad. Almost 15 out of 22 cases have been answered correctly, that is about 70%. However, one has to keep in mind that even if the children didn't know anything about the Frisian orthography, they had a chance to get 11 correct answers by guessing.

5.6 Composition

5.6.1 Composition in Dutch

For composition we used a test of the national testing institute. The children had to write a letter. In the letter the children had to argue that they had right to a music cassette offered although they could not send the requested 10 wrappings because there were no chocolate bars with that wrapping in the shops anymore.
We graded the texts on the amount of effective communication in the letter. The communicative effect was concretized as follows:
- the text includes a request for sending the cassette
- the text includes an explanation why not 10 wrappings could be send in
- the text includes information on the efforts to get the needed wrappings.

For the assessment of the results the national testing institute used a standard text with a score of 100 points. The results of the children are represented in Table 12.

Table 12
Results of the Dutch text composing

	n	average
Frisian speaking pupils	183	98.8
Dutch speaking pupils	129	100.5
National results	166	97.1

The average scores of the three groups are all in the region of 100 points. The score of the Dutch-speaking children is higher than the average score of the Frisian pupils, and as the score of the pupils involved in the national testing programme. However, the analysis shows that the difference in the scores is not significant.

5.6.2 Composition in Frisian

The children had to write a letter to a relative. In the letter they had to describe a rucksack they wanted as a birthday present. For the description the children had a picture of the rucksack at their disposal. The texts were graded on the extent of communicative effect of the letter. For the assessment of the results a standard text with a score of 100 points was used. The results of the pupils are represented in Table 13.

Table 13
Results of the Frisian text composing

	n	average	sd	T	sig
Frisian speaking pupils	182	68.1	31.4		
Dutch speaking pupils	121	56.8	31.2		

The table shows that neither the average score of the Frisian speaking pupils nor the score of the dutch-speaking pupils come into the region of the standard text. this means that the children are not capable at the end of of primary school to write a communicative letter in Frisian. One should not be astonished about this, because writing in Frisian is hardly an objective for education in Frisian in the primary schools.

6. CONCLUSIONS and RECOMMENDATIONS

In this article we analised quantitative and emperical data: a) the formulation of objectives, b) the absence of differentiation, c) the lack of motivation, d) the low level of basic (technical) reading, and e) the low level of spelling command.
On the grounds of these data we formulated two conclusions:
- Education in Frisian does not have any negative influence at all on the command of the Dutch language of either Frisian or Dutch-speaking pupils in Friesland.
- The command of the Frisian language of both Frisian and Dutch-speaking pupils is of a very low level at the end of primary school.

These data justify the conclusion that at this moment the practice of the obligation to teach Frisian does not contribute in a systematic way to the development of the Frisian language skills of the pupils. At this moment there is a big gap between the future standards for Frisian, as formulated in the national objectives, and schoolpractice. If the educational practice does not change, the schools are jointly responsible for the fact that the Frisian language will stay at the level of an oral language.
Schoolguidance-institutes, Teacher Training Colleges, and the Schoolinspectorate have to work together to develop good strategies for a language-policy for both languages in Friesland.

Evaluation of the results of education is seen as an instrument of the government to improve the quality of education. Because of its compulsory status in education, Frisian should be included in the next cycle of the national testing programme.

As already mentioned, from August 1993 Frisian is a compulsory subject in the first grades of secondary education. Objectives have been formulated by the central government for Frisian both in primary education and secondary education. These objectives are formulated both for Dutch and Frisian in fully parallel ways. They do not make any distinction between Frisian and Dutch speaking children. That means, that in the terminology of Fishman the educational policy may lead to full bilingualism, biliterate (Fishman 1976).
This policy has as its implication that the curriculum for Frisian in primary education has to be changed. There should be a minimum standard for grade 8 which can be used as the starting level for the Frisian lessons in secondary education. This minimum standard should consist of the four language skills. Educationalists and schoolguidance-institutes should develop good didactics for the education of both languages in Friesland and adequate teaching materials for Frisian.

As an answer to parents and politicians, at this moment relevant empirical data are available reflecting the level of language skills in both Dutch and Frisian at the end of primary education. That means, that we don't see any real prohibition against the development of a bilingual teaching model for Friesland, in which the Frisian language is used as a medium of instruction for a substantial part of the lessons. It is well known, that in other minority language areas bilingual teaching models have been developed, for example the "Diwan" schools in Brittany (France), the Irish medium schools "Gaelscoileanna" in Ireland and the Welsh medium school "Ysgolion-Cumraeg" in Wales.
Some years ago, the former Provincial Education Board, has carried out a pre-liminary study on the desirabilities and possibilities of a Frisian medium school, the "Fryske skoalle", which has as its target group pupils from the dominant speaking backgrounds. Theoretical ideas were derived from the study of Skutnabb-Kangas, Bilingualism or not (Skutnabb-Kangas 1984). For juridical and organisational reasons, the Provincial Education Board considered the foundation of a "Fryske skoalle", in the Dutch education system not realistic.
In our opinion, the development of a Frisian medium school of the immersion model, which is

characterised by the teaching of Dutch only as a subject and the use of Frisian as a medium for almost all the teaching time, is illegal. In article 9,5 of the Act on Primary Education is stated, that Frisian is permitted as a medium of instruction "along with" the standard language Dutch; that means, that - legally - Dutch as a medium of instruction can not be excluded from the curriculum.
However, on the basis of the theoretical model of "language maintenance" of Skutnabb-Kangas, we do see realistic possibilities for the creation of a bilingual teaching model "Fryske skoalle". In our opinion this bilingual teaching model has as its characteristic a systematic approach of the teaching of both languages Frisian and Dutch and the use of Frisian as a medium for about half of the teaching time. Because there does not exist a homogenious Frisian speaking area, it is neccesary to develop different models to fit the great variety of language situations in Friesland. In this model the roughly formulated national objectives should be concretised into minimum standards for each grade of the primary school. These standards should consist of the four language skills. It is also necessary to pay attention to the development of teaching materials and evaluation methods.

The foundation of a "Fryske skoalle" in which both languages Ducth and Frisian will be used as a medium, each for half the teaching time, will get more support by parents, education authorities and the inspectorate. In our opinion, for Friesland this teaching model is the most practicable and realistic one to set along with the "Diwan" schools etc. in other minority language areas.
However, for the success of this teaching model co-operation between all the institutes involved in education in Friesland is necessary. Co-operation, a theoretical and well reflected basis, and well considered strategies are essential to reach the goal of adequate bilingual education in Friesland. And, finally, it is essential to pay scientific attention to this development by research projects.

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